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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

Letter dated 23 March 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights

I am writing to you with reference to the statements of the representatives of Slovenia, the Republic of Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia at the session of the Commission of 17 March 1998.

1. The alleged concern of Slovenia for the members of the Albanian national minority in Serbia has never been - nor is it at present - prompted by genuine commitment to respect human rights, but exclusively by Slovenia's interests within the region and beyond, and by placing Slovenia and its politics to serve the realization of other, broader political and strategic interests. Many are familiar with its open manipulation with the Albanians who are endeavouring to win support for their separatist objectives.

2. As for the Croatian representatives, the doors of the United Nations bodies and organs dealing with human rights should be firmly shut to them.

Acts, rather than words and fabrications tailored at celebrated public relations agencies, are a telling illustration of the policy of this country.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is overwhelmed with live and dead evidence of the type of human rights prevailing in Croatia: orphans, families missing at least one member killed in the war, persons with mental disorders - among the youngest as well as the elderly - the disabled, the ailing, the

impoverished, those with no shelter, property or income, separated families trying to reunify all the way from Canada to New Zealand. The very moments the Croatian representative was pronouncing her statement at the rostrum of the Commission on Human Rights, airports in Norway were receiving hundreds of fresh Serb refugees from Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium.

Notwithstanding all the atrocities Croatia committed in the latest six-year period against non-Croats whose motherland Croatia used to be for centuries, the international community has failed to punish this regime. True, those taken to represent the international community nowadays issued warnings stating that, in view of some of its actions, Croatia might be denied financial or other aid. The second genocide perpetrated in the twentieth century by Croatia against an immense segment of its own population has never induced the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council to contemplate a draft resolution or to take a step beyond the Presidential Statement. Indeed, Croatia is allowed to take the floor of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and its voice, wrought with cynicism, is an insult to the ideal of human rights, and for the members of the Commission who are not in the position to have the main say as far as the Croatian policy in this domain is concerned.

3. As for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the members of the Albanian minority who inhabit its territory exercise rights equal to those granted under law and in practice to the members of the same minority in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In contrast to the members of the Albanian minority in Macedonia, who participate in the political life of the country, the members of the Albanian minority in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are refusing to enjoy these rights since their aim is secession and a greater Albania. The members of this minority, in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as well as in Macedonia, consider themselves a comprehensive segment of one entity, sharing among themselves one and only aim - creation of an enlarged State - greater Albania, by grabbing other peoples' territories settled and won beyond their mother country.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia does not attach importance to Macedonia's contention about a threat coming from Kosovo and Metohija, since the same danger is looming large in the midst of Macedonia itself, although it is not that outspoken. Hence, Macedonia's joining the regional initiatives aimed at containing the danger of the Kosovo and Metohija conflict spilling over into the broader Balkan region is of a tactical rather than fundamental importance.

Mr. Chairman, would you kindly have this letter distributed to all the members of the Commission and have it published as an official document of the fifty-fourth session, under agenda item 10.

(Signed): Miroslav MILOSEVIC
Charge d'affaires a.i.